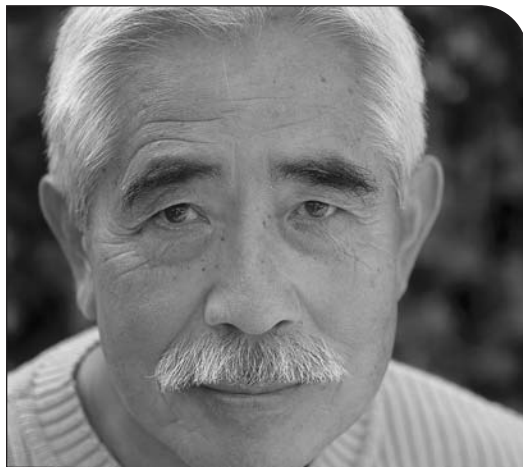


Home health care and community services



“Henry is doing better after his illness, but he may need some ongoing help. How do I find him the services he needs?”

START HERE

The right kind of support can go a long way to help people continue to lead independent, productive lives at home.

Together, you and the person you care for should start by checking with his or her doctor about what services are needed and who provides them. To find out if a patient is eligible for Medicare’s **Home Health Care** services, call the **Regional Home Health Intermediary (RHHI)**. A RHHI is a private company that contracts with Medicare to pay bills and check on the quality of home health care. To contact a RHHI, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) or visit www.medicare.gov on the web. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.

BASIC INFORMATION

Home health care under the **Original Medicare Plan** is short-term skilled care at home after hospitalization or for the treatment of an illness or injury.

Home health agencies provide home care services, including skilled nursing care, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, medical social work, and care by home health aides.

Medicare Home Health Care benefits are available to patients if they meet four conditions:

1. Their doctor decides the patient needs medical care in the home and makes a plan for their care at home, and
2. They need reasonable and necessary intermittent skilled care or physical therapy, continuing need for occupational therapy, or speech-language pathology ordered by the doctor and provided by a Medicare-certified home health agency. Home health services may also include medical social services, home health aide services or other services, durable medical equipment (such as wheelchairs, hospital beds, oxygen, and walkers), and medical supplies for use at home.
3. The person is homebound. This means they are normally unable to leave home and that leaving home is a major effort. When he or she leaves home, it must be infrequent, for a short time. The person may attend religious services. He or she may leave the house to get medical treatment, including therapeutic or psychosocial care. The person may also get care in an adult day care program that is licensed or certified by his or her state or accredited to furnish adult day care services in his or her state, and
4. The home health agency caring for the person must be approved by Medicare.

NOTE FOR WOMEN WITH OSTEOPOROSIS: Medicare helps pay for an injectable drug for osteoporosis in women who have Medicare Part B, meet the criteria for the Medicare home health benefit, and have a bone fracture that a doctor certifies was related to post-menopausal osteoporosis. The person you care for must also be certified by a doctor as unable to learn or unable to give herself the drug by injection, and that family and/or caregivers are unable or unwilling to give the drug by injection. Medicare covers the visit by a home health nurse to give the drug.

FIND OUT MORE

www.medicare.gov

Get a free copy of “Medicare and Home Health Care.” This booklet provides complete information on Home Health Care benefits. Under “Search Tools,” select “Find a Medicare Publication.”

www.aarp.org

Find information about community-based services and providing for health care needs so older people can stay in their homes.

www.mowaa.org

The Meals on Wheels website can help search for a meal service program in your community.

www.caremanager.org

Locate a geriatric care manager who can oversee care for your older relative or friend, from the National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers, Inc.

CARE OPTIONS

Even if the person you are caring for is receiving care not covered under the **Original Medicare Plan**, there are options for ongoing care.

Some **Medicare Advantage Plans** or **Medigap policies** may help with short-term care needs. The State Health Insurance Assistance Program can help you determine choices and coverage (see page 23 for their telephone number).

There are times when a person's needs extend beyond the intermittent skilled care provided through Medicare. Community-based services across the country support independent living and are designed to promote the health, well-being and independence of older adults. These services can also supplement the supportive activities of caregivers.

Often, community-based senior citizens' services offer companionship visits, help around the house, meal programs, caregiver respite, adult day care services, transportation, and more. These support services may be funded by state and county programs or offered by church or volunteer groups.

QUESTIONS TO ASK A HOME HEALTH AGENCY



- Is your agency Medicare-approved?
- How long have you served the community?
- Does this agency provide the services my relative or friend needs?
- How are emergencies handled?
- Is the staff on duty around the clock?
- How much do services and supplies cost?
- Will you be in regular contact with the doctor?

Snapshot of Original Medicare Coverage for Qualified Home Health Care Patients

		Medicare Helps Pay	Medicare Doesn't Pay
Care	Home Health Aide (part-time or intermittent)	●	
	Skilled Nursing Care (part-time or intermittent)	●	
	Personal Care (full-time)		○
	24-Hour/Day Care at Home		○
	Homemaker (shopping, cleaning, laundry)		○
	Home Meal Delivery		○
Therapy	Physical Therapy	●	
	Occupational Therapy	●	
	Speech-Language Therapy	●	
Medical Supplies	Wound Dressings	●	
	Durable Medical Equipment	●	
Drugs	Injectable Osteoporosis Drug*	●	

*Certain conditions will apply.

FIND A MEDICARE-APPROVED HOME HEALTH AGENCY

- Ask the doctor or hospital discharge planner
- Use a senior community referral service or agency
- Look in your telephone directory in the Yellow Pages under "home care" or "home health care"

www.first.gov

Click "Benefits and Grants" to find information on benefits such as Social Security, Medicare, pensions, and food assistance.

www.nahc.org

Information on home care needs, provider qualifications, locating home care agencies, and paying for home health care from the National Association for Home Care & Hospice.

www.eldercare.gov

Identify your Area Agency on Aging and local resources, including long-term care, adult care centers, home health agencies, and senior centers. Or, call the Eldercare Locator at 1-800-677-1116. Your AAA is part of a nationwide system that responds to the needs of seniors and their caregivers.